

U.S. Department of Education
2013 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program
A Public School - 13NY14

	Charter	Title 1	Magnet	Choice
School Type (Public Schools):	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name of Principal: Mrs. Sarah Vanliew

Official School Name: Cherry Road Elementary School

School Mailing Address: 201 Cherry Road
Syracuse, NY 13219-1598

County: Onondaga State School Code Number*: 420701060002

Telephone: (315) 426-3300 E-mail: svanliew@westhillschools.org

Fax: (315) 468-0623 Web site/URL: www.westhillschools.org

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that all information is accurate.

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent*: Mr. Casey Barduhn Superintendent e-mail: cbarduhn@westhillschools.org

District Name: Westhill CSD District Phone: (315) 426-3210

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that it is accurate.

(Superintendent's Signature) Date _____

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mrs. Doreen Bronchetti

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date _____

**Non-Public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to Aba Kumi, Director, National Blue Ribbon Schools (Aba.Kumi@ed.gov) or mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, National Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173.

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) or its equivalent each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's AYP requirement or its equivalent in the 2012-2013 school year. Meeting AYP or its equivalent must be certified by the state. Any AYP status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take foreign language courses.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2007 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for that period.
6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 or 2012.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district 2 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
1 Middle/Junior high schools
1 High schools
0 K-12 schools
4 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 16534

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Suburban
4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 11
5. Number of students as of October 1, 2012 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	64	67	131
4	70	76	146
5	0	0	0
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12	0	0	0
Total in Applying School:			277

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
2 % Asian
4 % Black or African American
3 % Hispanic or Latino
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
91 % White
0 % Two or more races
100 % Total

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2011-2012 school year: 4%
This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Step	Description	Value
(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2011 until the end of the school year.	3
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2011 until the end of the school year.	9
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	12
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2011	277
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.04
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	4

8. Percent of English Language Learners in the school: 1%
Total number of ELL students in the school: 3
Number of non-English languages represented: 2
Specify non-English languages:

Spanish, Portuguese

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 14%

Total number of students who qualify: 38

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

10. Percent of students receiving special education services: 11%

Total number of students served: 31

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

<u>3</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>7</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>9</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>7</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>1</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>3</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>13</u>	<u>0</u>
Resource teachers/specialists (e.g., reading specialist, media specialist, art/music, PE teachers, etc.)	<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>7</u>	<u>0</u>
Support staff (e.g., school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria aides, etc.)	<u>5</u>	<u>9</u>
Total number	<u>31</u>	<u>12</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1:

21:1

13. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Daily student attendance	97%	96%	95%	96%	94%
High school graduation rate	%	%	%	%	%

14. **For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools):**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2012.

Graduating class size: _____

Enrolled in a 4-year college or university _____%

Enrolled in a community college _____%

Enrolled in vocational training _____%

Found employment _____%

Military service _____%

Other _____%

Total _____**0%**

15. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award:

☒ No

☐ Yes

If yes, what was the year of the award?

PART III - SUMMARY

Our mission states, "Cherry Road School is a responsive community that encourages an appreciation for learning as a life-long process. Everyone is welcome, everyone belongs, and everyone has a contribution to make." Each day at Cherry Road School, after reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, students recite the "I Care Pledge": "I promise to be respectful, trustworthy, and fair. I will care about others and be a good citizen. I will take responsibility for my actions and work to the best of my ability. I make this pledge to my family, friends, teachers, and myself- I Care!" This mission statement and pledge are more than just words to the students, staff, and families of Cherry Road; it's the cornerstone of our program, and the rich tradition of academic excellence and social responsibility.

CRS always brings warm memories to all who have attended or worked at the school. It is a very warm, cheerful, child centered school in which its rich history and excellence is respected and reinforced. Cherry Road is the oldest of the four Westhill schools, and began as a two-room school. It's first principal, Miss Marion Parsons, is still honored each year as a fourth grade girl and boy are selected as the recipient of the Marion Parsons Academic Achievement Award. In fact, the brass bell that Miss Parsons used to call the children into school each day, still sits proudly in the principal's office. Over the past seventy plus years, eight additions have been added to the original structure. Other changes over the years have been the students served by CRS. For many years CRS was a K-8 school serving the only the Westvale Community, and graduates went on to Solvay High School or various schools in the city of Syracuse. Once the Westhill Central School District was established in 1960, Cherry Road was comprised of students from Onondaga Hill and Westvale communities in a variety of grade configurations. In 2012, a seven classroom addition, as well as a full-size gym, music room, and conference room was completed and Cherry Road is now comprised of grades second through fourth, with approximately 387 students. Demographically, Cherry Road has seen a modest rise in the number of economically disadvantaged students, and a more dramatic increase in the number of students with special needs.

Cherry Road has strived to adapt and change with the needs of our student population, and with ever-changing technology. Each classroom at Cherry Road houses five laptops, a SmartBoard and projector, as well as a computer for each teacher. Technology has been integrated into the curriculum, and become a critical tool used throughout the day.

Cherry Road School has a comprehensive Response to Intervention Model. Student progress is monitored through the common formative assessments, as well as through benchmark screening using AIMSweb, and progress monitoring. The AIMSweb formative assessment model informs the instructional process as it occurs by identifying at risk students as early as possible and importantly, those students who are learning and those who are not progressing satisfactorily. Based on these assessments, students are provided additional instruction on their level through the Intervention Block, a specific thirty minute block during the school day when no new, direct instruction takes place so students can either be provided additional time and support or enrichment depending on their demonstrated proficiency. Academic Intervention Services, as well as classroom instruction. The Student Support Team is a multidisciplinary team that helps design interventions for students experiencing difficulties. For students identified needing more intensive support, special education services are provided through pullout as well as push-in services, dependent on student needs.

A dramatic shift for the Cherry Road staff emerged in the spring of 2010 with learning about Professional Learning Communities. The four Essential Questions resonated with the staff, and led us to the success we see today in our student's achievements. They are:

- What do we want our students to know?
- How will we know when they've learned it?
- What will we do if they don't learn it?
- What will we do if they already know it?

The first step in our process was for collaborative teams of teachers and administration to meet over the summer and into the next school year to identify the Essential Learning for each subject area using the Common Core Learning Standards, Westhill District curricula, and current instructional programs. Once the Essential Learning was identified, assessments were designed to allow teachers to accurately identify whether students had learned what had been taught. The next two Essential Questions were without a doubt, the ones that provided the most excitement and challenge for the entire school, and require a paradigm shift from individual teachers in isolation focusing on their own students, to the idea that these are our kids and we can't help all of them learn what they must learn without a collective effort. Once we had identified what students should know and if they learned it, we went about the work of putting systematic interventions in place to provide additional instruction as well as enrichment based on our assessments. This involved a re-crafting of the master schedule, ensuring a common time for each team to schedule interventions with no conflicts, and identifying all staff available during that block to teach, including the classroom teachers. The 2011-2012 school year began with an intervention within the first six weeks of school. Using data from a common assessment, teachers and administration worked collaboratively identified areas of strength and weakness for each student and then grouped students to provide additional instruction. It's through this process that we really believe has made the difference in the academic achievements of our students. Through our common assessments, collaboratively designed weekly and unit assessments, we have been better able to identify those students needing additional time, as well as those that have mastered the content and then provide interventions based on this in a timely, direct, and systematic manner. This can only be done if the entire school works collaboratively to achieve this vision- something that we believe we have been able to do at Cherry Road.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

The Westhill Central School District has an intense focus on the achievement and success of our students at all levels. As a result, the district test results consistently rank among the highest in both the Central New York Region and New York State. We have historically done well on New York state assessment measures of proficiency. Therefore, we are challenging ourselves to increase our focus on assisting students to exceed the NYS proficiency standard, an achievement level equal to “advanced” level referenced in the Blue Ribbon application. The New York State descriptors for the standards of proficiency follow:

Level 1: Below Standard

Student performance does not demonstrate an understanding of the knowledge and skills expected at this grade level.

Level 2: Meets Basic Standard

Student performance demonstrates a partial understanding of the knowledge and skills expected at this grade level.

Level 3: Meets Proficiency Standard

Student performance demonstrates an understanding of the knowledge and skills expected at this grade level.

Level 4: Exceeds Proficiency Standard

Student performance demonstrates a thorough understanding of the knowledge and skills expected at this grade level.

The data trends found in both the grade 3 and grade 4 English Language Arts and Mathematics New York State assessments are encouraging. At both grades levels, there has been clear and steady growth in the “all students” population across the past three years. While the 2008-2009 and 2007 and 2008 results could be interpreted to mean that performance has fallen off since those earlier years. It should be noted that the assessment “cut scores” were increased significantly by the New York State Education Department between the assessments of 2009 and those of 2010 resulting in a state-wide fall in student assessment scores between 2009 and 2010 resulting from the application of more rigorous scoring bands.

Therefore, we will limit our discussion to those testing years in which the scoring bands were equivalent to one another: 2009-2010, 2010-2011 and 2011-2012.

The reader will notice that the levels of proficiency for both grade 3 English Language Arts and Mathematics have shown an increase during the past three years. In fact, in the area of English Language Arts, there has been a gain of 5% between 2010 and 2012 in the number of students scoring at the proficiency level, reaching 77%. In Mathematics in grade 3, there has been an even greater increase in achievement over these same years, increasing 9% between 2010 and 2012, to 84% scoring at proficiency.

At grade 4, the levels of proficiency for both English Language Arts and Mathematics have shown an equally promising increase during the past three years. In fact, in the area of English Language Arts, there has been a gain of 5% between 2010 and 2012 in the number of students scoring at the proficiency level, reaching the 2012 level of 85% proficient. In Mathematics at grade 4, we have performed consistently, reaching a level of 85% proficient in 2012 with a remarkable 49% of the student body exceeding proficiency.

There remain gaps between the achievement of the “all students” group and subgroup achievement. One of the variables that contribute to the inconsistent percentages of achievement is the low number of

students in these groups. When group size is in the single digits, a single student's score can greatly skew the subgroup results. Nevertheless, there remains an achievement gap to address. To that end, Cherry Road School has developed a comprehensive, individualized program of interventions and enrichments to which all students have access and in which all students participate. These interventions are in the areas of English Language Arts and Mathematics, are based on student assessment data, are specific-skill based, and are structured using flexible groups. At regular intervals throughout the school year, students participate in formative assessments, such as collaboratively created weekly and unit assessments. From these assessment results, students are grouped according to need, and receive tailored instruction that ranges from intense remediation, reinforcement, extension, and exploratory enrichment.

The entire school schedule is structured to allow for these school-wide interventions and it is all hands on deck to provide the interventions. Leading by example, the principal always has an intervention group. The school library media specialist, classroom teachers, special education teachers, and Academic Intervention teachers all have a part in working with students. Students enjoy this targeted attention and because of the flexible grouping, they are never stigmatized by membership in any one group. We believe that these “intervention blocks” are a key piece in Westhill’s most recent successes. Pre-test/post-test data show that these interventions are effective in both the long- and short-terms. It is through these interventions that we are addressing the achievement of our subgroup populations and supporting our already proficient students in their quest to exceed the proficiency standard.

2. Using Assessment Results:

Cherry Road School uses New York State assessment results and the results from common formative and summative assessments to gauge the on-going progress of all students in the building. Until 2012 when the New York State test questions were no longer available after test administration for analysis, the Cherry Road principal and teachers pored over New York State test results and questions. Each year, they scrutinized the item analyses and distracter reports to determine whether test question content or presentation was at the root of student difficulty with individual test items.

Of even greater usefulness to the faculty of Cherry Road School are the curriculum-based measures that are tightly linked to the curriculum and pedagogy implemented and practiced in the building. Each grade level collaborative team has developed comprehensive formative and summative assessments in both English Language Arts and mathematics that provide ample evidence of student performance and informs teacher praxis.

One of the biggest lessons learned from our assessment analyses is the need to systematically build student stamina in reading, writing and problem solving. In the area of reading, we determined that our students had the needed decoding and comprehension skills, but lacked the stamina needed for reading text for deep understanding and we did not provide students with systematic exposure to challenging narrative text and non-fiction. To develop the organizational structures needed to scaffold student skills, Cherry Road School implemented Lesley University’s Literacy Collaborative Readers Workshop (Fountas and Pinnell). This model has provided the needed instruction for our students to help them read for deep meaning and the opportunity for them to consistently engage with text for extended periods within the school day, the key to building stamina.

In conjunction with Readers Workshop, we have also implemented Writers Workshop from the Reading and Writing Project at Columbia University Teachers College (Calkins). This dovetails with Readers Workshop to capitalize on the reciprocal nature of reading and writing to provide our students with opportunities to write about their reading and to practice various writing genres.

In mathematics, using our constructivist mathematics program, Everyday Mathematics (University of Chicago), we provide students with conceptual frameworks within which students are instructed in a manner that requires students to explore and experience multiple pathways to problem solving. As students become more facile in their mathematical thinking and acquire the skills to solve problems with

multiple algorithms, we have found that their performance on the NYS mathematics assessments has improved. Couple these abilities with those in reading and writing, and we have students who not only know how to solve mathematics problems, but they can read the word problems accurately, attend to the detail therein, and write cogent explanations of their process for arriving at their answers.

An on-going part of all our literacy and mathematics instruction is student self- and peer-evaluation. We have students work in collaborative groups often. This provides opportunity for our students to assess the quality of their own work, to assist their peers, and to be assisted by their peers during the learning process. We provide models of work so that students have an understanding of what is successful work looks like and we use as many rubrics as possible so that students can continuously compare their on-going work with expectations.

We are fortunate to have a very involved parent community and consistent communication between home and school is the expectation and the norm. Teacher and parents exchange information via phone calls, email, notes and meetings. We hold formal parent-teacher conferences twice each year and written report cards are sent home twice yearly.

Cherry Road School has a rich heritage as a community school and holds events, such as learning fairs and reading events, to which the community is invited. The community is kept apprised of student achievement on the New York State assessments from information the district sends to all its residents and the news coverage the area media give to assessment results in the Central New York region. Having served generations of the same families, the district has a loyal community that demonstrates that loyalty in many ways, to include a strong record of taxpayer approved school budgets.

3. Sharing Lessons Learned:

Cherry Road School is a leader in the implementation of Professional Learning Communities whose very essence are a focus on and a commitment to the learning of each student, (DuFours) in the Westhill Central School District. Cherry Road School's steadily increasing student achievement rests largely on the collaborative work done by the principal and teachers. Conversations start with the analysis of student work; changes to instruction are made based on those analyses.

The Cherry Road principal is a leader among her fellow principals. She encourages her administrative colleagues to "steal" ideas from her and her faculty. Because she revamped her entire master schedule to build in time during the school day for collaborative team meetings, she was able to share some of the scheduling "tricks" she used to accomplish that. Our principal attends all collaborative team meetings to model meeting norms and to maintain credibility as a principal teacher. She believes in "walking the walk" with her teachers. It is important for her to suffer the same setbacks and frustrations that the teachers face; but this allows her to equally share the hard won joy of collective success.

The teachers of Cherry Road School have gone to other buildings to share their enthusiasm about their collaborative work and to discuss the improvement in student achievement and teacher pedagogy that results from such focused endeavor. They have guided other grade-level teams on the bumpy road of collaborative work.

In addition to these professional situations, the Cherry Road School faculty created a music video touting the power of student-focused collaborative work. Using a popular song, this inspired group wrote and performed a song parody and put their music video on a CD to share with central office administrators. The central office administrators were so amused by the parody, that those administrators made sure that the music video was shown to the entire K-12 faculty as a kick-off to one of the district's staff development days.

The combination of serious work and not-so-serious celebration has made the Cherry Road School faculty stand out as educational leaders. They possess the collegiality, creativity and work ethic to channel their efforts not only into work that will benefit their students, but into work and celebration that benefits their colleagues, too.

4. Engaging Families and Communities:

Cherry Road School has a rich heritage as a community school, and as a result is cherished by the community as a whole. Rich in traditions, Cherry Road maintains its allegiance to that heritage and past, all the while embracing the present and future. Parents, as well as the greater community, are an integral part of that. Parents are seen as partners in the academic and social success of our students. On-going communication between home and school is paramount, and communication methods, such as newsletters, websites, Blackboard, and effective parent-teacher conferences, are continually being explored and developed. One such area that has been a critical piece of our success is bringing parents into the conversation regarding our assessments, and their use in our Intervention Block.

The integration of Character Education has been a long-standing tradition at Cherry Road through the teaching and application of the “I Care Pledge” and the character traits expressed in the pledge of respect, trustworthiness, fairness, citizenship, and responsibility. This application and reinforcement occurs in all aspects of a student’s day from the bus, to the classroom, the hallways, recess, and the cafeteria.

We provide many opportunities for families to be involved in their child’s education beyond the typical school day. Our parent organization, with the support of the school, provides many enriching opportunities for families, such as a family night at the local science museum or zoo, movie night, and snow tubing night. In addition, events such as “Readers from Birth” and Everyday Math Nights support our mission as a school academically, and also to foster and build relationships with families.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

At the core of our work at Cherry Road School, is the identification of exactly what it is that we want our students to learn, and the focus of our school is on learning- not on teaching. In order to do that, collaborative teams used the Common Core Learning Standards, the Westhill curriculum, and our current instructional programs to identify the Essential Learning for each curricular area.

Our English-Language Arts curriculum focuses on a balanced approach to literacy. Students are engaged in guided, independent, and shared reading experiences using a core skills program as a foundation, with a Reader's Workshop approach. Writer's Workshop, using the Lucy Calkins Units of Study that lays out instruction using teaching points, mini-lessons, strategies, and tools to teach writing, is implemented as well. Implementing the pedagogical shifts of the Common Core in English-Language Arts (balancing information and literary text, knowledge in the disciplines, text complexity, text-based answers, writing from sources, and academic vocabulary) we have worked to embed the shifts into our practice and specifically address the issue of text complexity and non-fiction use.

Our Math curriculum is taught through the use of Everyday Mathematics program, which we have found helps our students become lifelong mathematical thinkers and problem solvers. Concepts are introduced and taught, then strategically revisited and reinforced over the course of the year to guide students toward achieving mastery and long-term retention. Everyday Mathematics grade level goals, aligned with the Common Core State Learning Standards, include Numbers and Numeration, Operations and Computation, Data and Chance, Measurement and Reference Frames, Geometry, and Pattern, Fractions, and Algebra.

Science content is taught through the use of science kits that include hands-on experiments such as creating an open and closed circuit in fourth grade, and creating a boat for buoyancy in third grade to bring science "alive" for our students. In addition, teachers incorporate non-fiction texts to build a foundation of scientific knowledge for our students.

Our social studies curriculum focuses on world communities and local and New York State history. Students learn through appropriate non-fiction as well as fictional trade books and texts, hands-on projects and activities such as creating the Great Barrier Reef, and experiencing the food and language of various countries in third grade. In fourth grade the curriculum supports many field trips and experiences with local historical places and speakers to evolve a greater understanding of our local and State history, including trips to the Erie Canal Museum, Salt Museum, local Native American guest speakers, and a boat trip on the historical Erie Canal to experience an aqueduct.

Health topics include nutrition, the human body, safety, and social skills. Special emphasis has been placed on dealing with conflict and responding to bullying. Physical education classes promote and emphasize developing life-long physical activity and learning skills through a non-competitive, fun format.

Classes in the Arts help develop a well-rounded student at Cherry Road. Students learn about artistic technique and history through study and application. A culminating "Art Night" in the spring showcases a sample of the work and talent of our student artists. Music history and technique are taught through a rich curriculum that emphasizes performance vocally as well as using instruments such as the ukulele and other instruments. A full participation chorus at each grade level performs at concerts twice a year and at community events. Each assembly at Cherry Road incorporates music, and begins with a singing of the National Anthem and the Cherry Road School song.

A certified Library-Media Specialist integrates technology through direct instruction once a week and with projects. In addition, technology is a part of daily instruction and practice in our classrooms. Through the use of SmartBoards, iPods, projectors, Video conferencing and streaming, student needs are met through the integration of these tools.

The integration of Character Education has been a long-standing tradition at Cherry Road through the teaching and application of the “I Care Pledge” and the character traits expressed in the pledge of respect, trustworthiness, fairness, citizenship, and responsibility. This application and reinforcement occurs in all aspects of a student’s day from the bus, to the classroom, the hallways, recess, and the cafeteria.

Student progress is monitored through the common formative assessments, as well as through benchmark screening using AIMS Web, and progress monitoring. Based on these assessments, students are provided additional instruction on their level through the Intervention Block, AIS instruction, as well as classroom instruction. For students identified needing more intensive support, special education services are provided through pullout as well as push-in services, dependent on student needs.

2. Reading/English:

Cherry Road School’s reading instruction is based on a core foundation of skills with a Reader’s Workshop approach (Fountas and Pinnel). This framework is essential in providing students with a balanced literacy instruction that includes guided reading, shared reading, independent reading, read aloud, and writing about reading.

The core reading program of Houghton-Mifflin has provided the scope and sequence of skills and strategies that are introduced and taught at each grade, ensuring that we have a comprehensive plan of instruction. Teachers devote daily time to explicit teaching and practice of these skills, which are reinforced throughout the various reading opportunities that students are provided. The true key to our reading instruction is the Reader’s Workshop model. Daily guided, shared, and independent reading has enabled our students to build stamina as readers. Students have daily opportunities to read in large groups, small groups, and independently. Reading instruction is at their grade level, as well as their instructional level. A variety of literature, both fiction and non-fiction are utilized along with student-selected texts at a student’s “just right” level. Comprehension is a focus, with an emphasis on thinking within, beyond, and about the text. Students respond to their reading through weekly letter writing about their independent reading. Fluency instruction is also part of the balanced program, with an emphasis on appropriate rate, phrasing, and intonation. This is addressed in a myriad of methods including Reader’s Theatre, an instructional method, repeated and echo reading, poetry, and plays.

The acquisition and development of reading skills by individual students is monitored by classroom teachers daily, as well as through common formative assessments, and school-wide benchmarking. Individual student needs are addressed in a myriad of ways. In addition to sound, research-based instruction in the classroom, teachers differentiate instruction to address specific student needs. A systematic, comprehensive intervention block has enabled us to further address these needs to address the reading skills of students perform below, at, and above grade level. For students needing support beyond that, Academic Intervention Services are delivered in a pullout model in small groups. When more intensive instruction is required, students may be seen individually, or more frequently.

Reading instruction is a priority at Cherry Road School. The key to our student success in reading begins with clearly defined student outcomes, strong research-based practice, frequent monitoring of student progress, and a response to student progress or lack of through systematic interventions.

3. Mathematics:

At Cherry Road School, mathematics instruction is based on the constructivist mathematics program, Everyday Mathematics. After purchasing the Common Core edition of Everyday Mathematics, Cherry Road teachers and administration looked at the latest edition, aligned it further with the Common Core, and identified areas of need, using guidance documents from NYS Education Department. This Essential Learning became the blueprint of our instruction.

Everyday Mathematics provides students with the conceptual framework in which students are instructed that requires the students to explore and experience multiple pathways to problem solving. Rather than teaching a unit of skill in isolation, skills are taught and revisited in a spiral approach. Concepts are introduced and taught, then strategically revisited and reinforced over the course of the year to guide students toward achieving mastery. We have found that this approach as a result has produced students who are mathematical thinkers, and more secure in the expected skills.

The acquisition and development of mathematical skills by individual students is monitored by classroom teachers daily, as well as through common formative assessments. Individual student needs are addressed in a myriad of ways. In addition to sound, research-based instruction in the classroom, teachers differentiate instruction to address specific student needs. A systematic, comprehensive intervention block has enabled us to further address these needs to address the mathematical skills of students perform below, at, and above grade level. For students needing support beyond that, Academic Intervention Services are delivered in a pullout model in small groups. When more intensive instruction is required, students may be seen individually, or more frequently.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

Embedded in our mission statement are the central themes of our character education program entitled, “WE CARE: We Explore Character, Accepting Responsibility and Excellence”. While for some, a character education program could be seen as an “extra”, we at CRS believe it is foundational to our program and mission. The cornerstone of this is the “I Care Pledge” which is recited at the beginning of each day. The pledge helps students to learn what good citizenship are, the expectations of behavior at Cherry Road School, and how to become people of good character who will choose to “Do the Right Thing”.

I Care Pledge

I promise to be respectful, trustworthy, and fair.

I will care about others and be a good citizen.

I will take responsibility for my actions and work to the best of my ability.

I make this pledge to my family, friends, teachers, and myself.

I CARE!

At Cherry Road School, the aspects of this pledge are directly taught in the opening days of school, and are reinforced each and every day throughout the year. We use common phrases such as, “At Cherry Road School...” “What does it look like or sound like?” “You know the right thing to do. Do the right thing.” which are all part of our common, shared language. In addition, students and teachers sign an “At Cherry Road School” poster that highlights the traits and the pledge and bring the signed copy with the class when they travel to special area classes, recess, lunch, and assemblies as a means of reinforcing the expected standard of behavior in all aspects of the school day. Teaching of the character traits focuses on what the trait looks like and sounds like throughout the day in various settings. Several staff members composed a song, “Do the Right Thing” which is taught and performed by students each and every year as yet another reinforcement of our beliefs.

5. Instructional Methods:

A critical element in Cherry Road’s ability to differentiate instruction is the Intervention Block, which has emerged as part of our focus on Essential Learning. Our interventions are based on the idea that the

interventions, not remediation, are systematic, timely, and directive. Once we effectively identified what it is we want all students to learn and how we will assess that learning, the critical component is what we'll do with that knowledge and how we address that question.

Once teachers at Cherry Road have administered the common formative assessment, they meet as a collaborative team to analyze the results and look for patterns in student learning. It is from that analysis that the intervention is determined. Typically, a clear pattern begins to emerge of skill and concept strength and weaknesses in groups of students. Students, from each classroom, are grouped together for a specific period of time for additional, specific instruction (provided by a grade level teacher, or principal, or special education teacher, or AIS teacher, or a librarian) in that area, and then assessed again to determine progress upon completion of the intervention. This allows students from any of the homerooms to receive instruction at their own level- below, on, or above. We believe that this intervention provides the necessary time and support for those students having difficulty, but also provides the necessary enrichment for those students who have already mastered the concept. It is through this intervention that we believe have allowed our achieving students an opportunity at enrichment that would not exist within a typical classroom setting. In a Math-Science-Technology intervention last year, students who had already mastered the more traditional concepts created an iMovie for incoming 2nd and 3rd graders (who would not be able to tour Cherry Road prior to the start of school due to construction). Students worked in a large group to create the theme and storyboard. Once paired with a partner, they chose their topic, created an individual storyboard, wrote a script, and filmed their own segment using Flip cameras. Using iMovie, students then imported video, created transitions for their segments, and put the movie to music. The movie was a rousing success and truly an example of addressing all students' needs.

6. Professional Development:

At Cherry Road School, we recognize the critical role that professional development plays in our development as a Professional Learning Community. As we have collectively embraced this concept, the purpose and function of professional development has undergone a dramatic change in the past two years from individually based goals to goals identified by the building and collaborative teams. If Professional Development is going to make a difference in schools, it can't just make the individual smarter, it needs to make the school smarter (Fullan). Our district has supported this work through time devoted to furthering our work on the Essential Learning and common formative assessments both during the school year and in the summer. Teachers and administration work throughout the summer to achieve our common goals, and further our common work. District support has also enabled teams of teachers and administration to attend a weeklong Professional Learning Communities Institute in Syracuse hosted by the Onondaga-Cortland Madison BOCES, and network with teams from neighboring districts that are working on becoming Professional Learning Communities.

As a result of this work, we have also identified areas of growth individually and as a collaborative team, that have been addressed again through the support of our district. Outside trainers from Lesley University have provided on-site professional development in the implementation of Reader's Workshop. Another area of support is through a Book Study group, as well as a technology users group that meets regularly to provide support for teachers implementing the use of a SmartBoard in lessons, or developing a Blackboard site.

7. School Leadership:

The leadership philosophy at Cherry Road School is one of collaboration and shared leadership. Every staff member is a valued and critical member of our team, and his or her contribution to our collective goals is directly linked to our success. The principal is cognizant of the strength of each team member and has worked diligently to capitalize on those strengths and build a team with a collective vision and purpose. Critical for the success of Cherry Road School is the success of the collaborative teams. The principal must consistently communicate through her words and actions, that the people in Cherry Road are capable of accomplishing great things through their collective efforts. Although every member of the

Cherry Road team will tell you that the path we are on as a Professional Learning Community is a difficult one, they will also tell you that this work is invigorating and energizing. It's taken even our most veteran of teachers, who people stereotypically think are in the twilight of their careers and made them disciples and prophets of our work- a focus on learning for all students.

Shared leadership is also evident in the Character Education program, WE CARE. The long-lasting success of the program certainly must be attributed to the shared vision, leadership, and implementation of all staff. Although "tweaked" each year, it's original tenets have remained the same and are embraced by the greater community. Since its inception in the 1990's, We Care has survived and thrived through a group of invested and devoted staff that implement and nurture this cornerstone of Cherry Road.

It's been an exciting time to be a part of the Cherry Road team. The first spark started with whole staff conversations regarding data analysis back in early 2000's, and a shared commitment followed by the discovery and then immersion as a Professional Learning Community.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 3 Test: New York State Mathematics

Edition/Publication Year: Annual Publication Publisher: 2007-2011 CTB McGraw-Hill; 2012 Pearson

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	May	Apr	Jan	Jan
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level 3 and 4	84	77	75	98	93
Level 4	17	23	29	36	23
Number of students tested	124	145	132	153	133
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1				
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Level 3 and 4	67	58	64	Masked	77
Level 4	0	17	21	Masked	0
Number of students tested	15	12	14	8	13
2. African American Students					
Level 3 and 4	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Level 4	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	7	6	5	2	2
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level 3 and 4	Masked	Masked		Masked	
Level 4	Masked	Masked		Masked	
Number of students tested	4	1		2	
4. Special Education Students					
Level 3 and 4	40	43	25	88	67
Level 4	0	14	0	18	17
Number of students tested	10	14	12	17	12
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level 3 and 4		Masked	Masked		Masked
Level 4		Masked	Masked		Masked
Number of students tested		3	3		1
6. Asian					
Level 3 and 4	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Level 4	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	2	3	3	2	2
NOTES:					
Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested.					
For the 2009-2010 school year results, the New York State Education Department raised the English-Language Arts and math cut scores for the Basic and Proficient performance levels. Raising the bar in this manner has caused a statewide drop in the percent of students scoring at proficiency levels 3 and 4. A student scoring at or above the new Basic standard (Level 2) is on track to pass the English or math Regents exam required for high school graduation. A student scoring at or above the new Proficiency standard (Level 3) is on track to earn a college-ready score on the English or math Regents examination. In the July 28, 2010 news release, Senior Deputy Commissioner for P-12 Education John King stated, "These newly defined cut scores do not mean					

that students who were previously scoring at the Proficient standard and are now labeled Basic have earned less. Rather, the lower numbers of students meeting the Proficient standard reflects that we are setting the bar higher and we expect students, teachers, and parents to reach even higher to achieve these new targets. Additional information can be found in the news release materials at: http://www.oms.nysed.gov/press/Grades3-8_Results07282010.html
http://www.oms.nysed.gov/press/Regents_Approve_Scoring_Changes.html

13NY14

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 3 Test: New York State English-Language Arts

Edition/Publication Year: Annual Publication Publisher: 2007-2011 CTB McGraw-Hill; 2012 Pearson

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	May	Apr	Jan	Jan
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level 3 and 4	77	79	72	86	81
Level 4	6	14	16	17	15
Number of students tested	124	145	132	153	134
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1				
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Level 3 and 4	33	75	64	Masked	62
Level 4	7	8	14	Masked	0
Number of students tested	15	12	14	8	13
2. African American Students					
Level 3 and 4	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Level 4	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	7	6	5	2	2
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level 3 and 4	Masked	Masked		Masked	
Level 4	Masked	Masked		Masked	
Number of students tested	4	1		2	
4. Special Education Students					
Level 3 and 4	20	50	25	53	50
Level 4	0	7	0	6	8
Number of students tested	10	14	12	17	12
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level 3 and 4		Masked	Masked		Masked
Level 4		Masked	Masked		Masked
Number of students tested		3	3		1
6. Asian					
Level 3 and 4	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Level 4	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	2	3	3	2	2
NOTES: Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested. For the 2009-2010 school year results, the New York State Education Department raised the English-Language Arts and math cut scores for the Basic and Proficient performance levels. Raising the bar in this manner has caused a statewide drop in the percent of students scoring at proficiency levels 3 and 4. A student scoring at or above the new Basic standard (Level 2) is on track to pass the English or math Regents exam required for high school graduation. A student scoring at or above the new Proficiency standard (Level 3) is on track to earn a college-ready score on the English or math Regents examination. In the July 28, 2010 news release, Senior Deputy Commissioner for P-12 Education John King stated, "These newly defined cut scores do not mean that students who were previously scoring at the Proficient standard and are now labeled Basic have earned less. Rather, the					

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13NY14

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 4 Test: New York State Mathematics

Edition/Publication Year: Annual Publication Publisher: 2007-2011 CTB McGraw-Hill; 2012 Pearson

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	May	Apr	Jan	Jan
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level 3 and 4	85	83	84	93	88
Level 4	49	46	37	41	34
Number of students tested	146	132	154	135	152
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	99
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	2			
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	1			
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Level 3 and 4	76	82	77	75	54
Level 4	38	36	31	25	31
Number of students tested	21	11	13	16	13
2. African American Students					
Level 3 and 4	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Level 4	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	4	6	4	3	4
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level 3 and 4	Masked		Masked		Masked
Level 4	Masked		Masked		Masked
Number of students tested	2		2		3
4. Special Education Students					
Level 3 and 4	50	42	50	67	65
Level 4	25	8	17	33	6
Number of students tested	16	12	18	15	17
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level 3 and 4	Masked	Masked		Masked	Masked
Level 4	Masked	Masked		Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	2	3		1	1
6. Asian					
Level 3 and 4	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Level 4	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	3	3	2	2	3
NOTES: Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested. For the 2009-2010 school year results, the New York State Education Department raised the English-Language Arts and math cut scores for the Basic and Proficient performance levels. Raising the bar in this manner has caused a statewide drop in the percent of students scoring at proficiency levels 3 and 4. A student scoring at or above the new Basic standard (Level 2) is on track to pass the English or math Regents exam required for high school graduation. A student scoring at or above the new Proficiency standard (Level 3) is on track to earn a college-ready score on the English or math Regents examination. In the July 28, 2010 news release, Senior Deputy Commissioner for P-12 Education John King stated, "These newly defined cut scores do not mean that students who were previously scoring at the Proficient standard and are now labeled Basic have earned less. Rather, the					

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13NY14

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 4 Test: New York State English-Language Arts

Edition/Publication Year: Annual Publication Publisher: 2007-2011 CTB McGraw-Hill; 2012 Pearson

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	May	Apr	Jan	Jan
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level 3 and 4	85	75	84	89	82
Level 4	10	9	16	8	5
Number of students tested	146	132	154	132	151
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	2	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	1			
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Level 3 and 4	76	73	77	83	46
Level 4	0	0	8	0	0
Number of students tested	21	11	13	12	13
2. African American Students					
Level 3 and 4	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Level 4	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	4	6	4	3	4
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level 3 and 4	Masked		Masked		Masked
Level 4	Masked		Masked		Masked
Number of students tested	2		2		3
4. Special Education Students					
Level 3 and 4	44	8	44	57	31
Level 4	0	0	6	0	0
Number of students tested	16	12	18	14	16
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level 3 and 4	Masked	Masked		Masked	Masked
Level 4	Masked	Masked		Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	2	3		1	1
6. Asian					
Level 3 and 4	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Level 4	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	3	3	2	2	3
NOTES: Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested. For the 2009-2010 school year results, the New York State Education Department raised the English-Language Arts and math cut scores for the Basic and Proficient performance levels. Raising the bar in this manner has caused a statewide drop in the percent of students scoring at proficiency levels 3 and 4. A student scoring at or above the new Basic standard (Level 2) is on track to pass the English or math Regents exam required for high school graduation. A student scoring at or above the new Proficiency standard (Level 3) is on track to earn a college-ready score on the English or math Regents examination. In the July 28, 2010 news release, Senior Deputy Commissioner for P-12 Education John King stated, "These newly defined cut scores do not mean that students who were previously scoring at the Proficient standard and are now labeled Basic have earned less. Rather, the					

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